

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY MANAGUA PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 232444

E.O. 11652: N.A.

TAGS: CASC

SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY: WELFARE/WHEREABOUTS

FROM ASSISTANT SECRETARY BENNET

1. I HAVE RECEIVED CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY REGARDING SAFETY AND WHEREABOUTS OF MR. JERRY TONTI, WIFE LORENA, AND THREE CHILDREN WHO HAVE BEEN MISSING IN LEONE. TONTI IS AMERICAN CITIZEN; WIFE IS DAUGHTER OF ENRIQUE ALVERADO, APPARENTLY A LEADING LEONE BUSINESSMAN WITH WHOM TONTI WAS WORKING IN FAMILY PHARMACEUTICAL BUSINESS. RELATIVES REACHED TONTI BY PHONE SEPTEMBER 12. TONTI WAS REPORTED BARRICADED IN HOUSE. FOOD AND WATER WERE IN SHORT SUPPLY. SOME POOR CITIZENS TRYING TO BREAK IN SEEKING FOOD. TONTI SAID HE HAD CONTINGENCY PLAN TO LEAVE LEONE BY BOAT. THIS MORNING, SEPTEMBER 13, FAMILY AGAIN REACHED TONTI RESIDENCE AND WERE TOLD BY SPANISH-SPEAKING PERSON WHO SAID SHE WAS THE MAID THAT FAMILY HAD LEFT ONE-HALF HOUR PREVIOUSLY FOR THE U.S.

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2. PLEASE TRY TO REACH TONTI RESIDENCE (TELEPHONE LEONE 3005) AND ESTABLISH WHEREABOUTS. FAMILY WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR ANY NEWS. CHRISTOPHER

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NNN

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